

**Billing Code: 4710-05**

**Department of State**

**Public Notice**

**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request  
for Grant Proposals: Study of the United States Institutes  
for Student Leaders on U.S. History and Government**

**Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement**

**Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/A/E/USS-11-10**

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.009**

**Key Dates: July-August, 2011 AND January, February, 2012**

**Application Deadline: December 03, 2010**

**Executive Summary:** The Branch for the Study of the United States, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), invites proposal submissions for the design and implementation of six (6) Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders on U.S. History and Government, pending the availability of funds. Participants will be drawn from countries throughout Central and South America and the Caribbean. Three institutes will be conducted entirely in Spanish, and the remaining three in English. Each academic institute will

be five weeks in duration, including a one-week integrated study tour.

**I. Funding Opportunity Description:**

**Authority:**

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

**Purpose:** All ECA programs seek to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. The Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders on U.S. History and Government provide a group of undergraduate students, who have little to no prior experience in the U.S., with an introduction to U.S. history, government, society, and culture. In addition to this core American Studies component, students will participate in seminars, workshops, and activities to strengthen their leadership skills. Participants will also engage in volunteer activities and learn about civic engagement as a core American value. Throughout the course of the institutes, participants will interact with American peers in the classroom, community, and through a weekend long home-stay experience.

This award will support up to 120 undergraduate participants. Three institutes for twenty participants each will take place in Summer 2011 while an additional three institutes will take place in Winter 2012. Please refer to

the Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document for programmatic details.

**Please note:** This award will be in the form of a cooperative agreement. In a cooperative agreement, ECA is substantially involved in the management and oversight of the institute. Please refer to the statement of work in the POGI to see the division of responsibilities between the recipient institution and the Program Office.

## **II. Award Information:**

**Type of Award:** Cooperative Agreement

ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under number 1 above.

**Fiscal Year Funds:** FY 2011

**Approximate Total Funding:** \$1,440,000

**Approximate Number of Awards:** one

**Approximate Average Award:** \$1,440,000

**Anticipated Award Date:** Pending availability of funds,  
February 2011

**Anticipated Project Completion Date:** February, 2012

**Additional Information:** Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this cooperative agreement for two additional fiscal years, before openly competing it again.

**III.) Eligibility Information:**

**III.1. Eligible applicants:** The Bureau is seeking detailed proposals from accredited post-secondary U.S. institutions (community colleges, liberal arts colleges, public and private universities), consortia of organizations, and/or from public and private non-profit organizations meeting the eligibility requirements outlined below.

The Bureau intends to issue one award and is seeking proposals from organizations with the ability to administer, support, and oversee the six academic institutes. Recipient organizations may be public or private organizations that provide sub-awards to up to six institutions of higher education to implement the institutes. Or, higher education institutions may apply to administer and implement the institutes working with branch

campuses, other colleges in a consortium, or partnering with any other institution of higher education.

Institutions of higher education may **host** no more than one institute at a time (for up to 20 students), but may host up to two institutes per year (e.g. a summer and a winter institute); this policy is to advance the Bureau's goals of diversity and increased mutual understanding, and to provide more individualized attention to participants.

The recipient organization will serve as the lead organization and will be responsible for the oversight of all six institutes and must appoint a project director who will be the main point of contact and liaison with ECA.

**III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds:** There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, the Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB Circular A-110, (Revised), Subpart C.23 - Cost Sharing and Matching. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

**III.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:** Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$60,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one award, in an amount up to \$1,440,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than

four years experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition. The Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

**IV.) Application and Submission Information:**

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

**IV.1 Contact Information to Request an Application**

Package: Please contact the Study of the U.S. Branch, ECA/A/E/USS, SA-5, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, tel: (202) 632-3337, fax: (202) 632-9411, RustanAM@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number (ECA/A/E/USS-11-10) located at the top of this announcement when making your request.

Alternatively, an electronic application package may be obtained from grants.gov. Please see section IV.3f for further information.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document which consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. It also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to this competition.

Please specify Program Officer Amy M. Rustan and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number (ECA/A/E/USS-11-10) located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

#### IV.2 To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet:

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at

<http://exchanges.state.gov/grants/open2.html>, or from the

Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Please read all information before downloading.

IV.3.       Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the instructions provided below.

IV.3a.       You are required to have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a DUNS number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a DUNS number, access <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your DUNS number is included in the appropriate box of the SF - 424 which is part of the formal application package.

IV.3b.       All proposals must contain an executive summary, proposal narrative, and budget.

IV.3c. You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- 1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.
- 2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-

page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

If your organization is a private nonprofit which has not received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the past three years, or if your organization received nonprofit status from the IRS within the past four years, you must submit the necessary documentation to verify nonprofit status as directed in the PSI document. Failure to do so will cause your proposal to be declared technically ineligible.

IV.3d. Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

IV.3d.1 **ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA**

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

ECA prefers that the award recipient issue DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov> or from:

United States Department of State

Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation

Office of Designation

ECA/EC/D/P5

SA-5, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

Department of State

Washington, DC 20037

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further  
information.

IV.3d.2    **Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines**

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of American political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and disabilities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content.

Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support for Diversity' section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into your proposal. Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

#### **IV.3d.3. Program Monitoring and Evaluation**

The recipient organization should clearly describe its plan for overseeing the activities of up to six host institutions. Ideally the recipient organization staff will conduct site visits at each host institution once throughout the course of each Institute. Additionally, the recipient organization should provide to ECA a brief weekly

written summary of the highlights of each program and a description of any challenges and how they were addressed. The Bureau expects that the recipient organization will be in regular contact with all host institutions and stay up to date on all issues.

Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. Proposals should include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to be used to link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau expects that the recipient organization will survey participants and be able to provide responses to key evaluation questions including participants' satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, and changes in behavior as a result of the program. The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depends heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a

program. Evaluation plans should include a description of project objectives, anticipated project outcomes, and how and when outcomes (performance indicators) will be measured. The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. Proposals should also demonstrate how project objectives link to the goals of the program described in the academic residency component above.

The monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. Outcomes, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

**Please note:** Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term outcome, whereas behavior and institutional changes are normally considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring and evaluation plan will be judged on how well it 1) specifies intended outcomes; 2) gives clear descriptions of how each outcome will be measured; 3) identifies when particular outcomes will be measured; and 4) provides a clear description of the data collection strategies for each outcome (i.e., surveys, interviews, or focus groups).

The recipient organization will be required to synthesize the evaluation findings of participating host institutions and analyze and compile findings into single reports to be provided to ECA at established deadlines. All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

IV.3e. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

IV.3e.1. Applicants must submit SF-424A - "Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs" along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification. Administrative costs should be kept to a minimum and should represent no greater than 30% of total project costs.

IV.3e.2. Allowable costs for the program include the following:

- 1) Institute staff salary and benefits
- 2) Participant housing and meals
- 3) Participant domestic travel and per diem
- 4) Textbooks, educational materials, and admissions fees
- 5) Honoraria for guest speakers

6) Follow-on programming for alumni of Study of the United States programs.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions. The POGI document includes a sample budget; please refer to the suggested line items and amounts, when listed.

**IV.3f. Application Deadline and Methods of Submission:**

Application Deadline Date: December 03, 2010

Reference Number: ECA/A/E/USS-11-10

Methods of Submission:

Applications may be submitted in one of two ways:

- 1.) In hard-copy, via a nationally recognized overnight delivery service (i.e., Federal Express, UPS, Airborne Express, or U.S. Postal Service Express Overnight Mail, etc.), or
- 2.) electronically through <http://www.grants.gov>.

Along with the Project Title, all applicants must enter the above Reference Number in Box 11 on the SF-424 contained in the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) of the solicitation document.

#### IV.3f.1 Submitting Printed Applications

Applications must be shipped no later than the above deadline. Delivery services used by applicants must have in-place, centralized shipping identification and tracking systems that may be accessed via the Internet and delivery people who are identifiable by commonly recognized uniforms and delivery vehicles. Proposals shipped on or before the above deadline but received at ECA more than seven days after the deadline will be ineligible for further consideration under this competition. Proposals shipped after the established deadlines are ineligible for consideration under this competition. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of application. It is each applicant's responsibility to ensure that each package is marked with a legible tracking number and to monitor/confirm delivery to ECA via the Internet. Delivery of proposal packages may

not be made via local courier service or in person for this competition. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Only proposals submitted as stated above will be considered.

Important note: When preparing your submission please make sure to include one extra copy of the completed SF-424 form and place it in an envelope addressed to "ECA/EX/PM".

The original and six (6) copies of the application should be sent to:

Program Management Division

ECA-IIP/EX/PM

Ref.: ECA/A/E/USS-11-10

SA-5, Floor 4

Department of State

2200 C Street, NW

Washington, D.C. 20037

IV.3f.2 - Submitting Electronic Applications

Applicants have the option of submitting proposals electronically through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Find" portion of the system.

**PLEASE NOTE: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov**

To submit an online application, please follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>).

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this RFGP to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors

including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system. ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

Business Hours: Monday - Friday, 7AM - 9PM Eastern Time

Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.), Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after midnight of the application deadline date will be automatically rejected by the grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

Please refer to the Grants.gov website, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation.

Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application.

IV.3f.3 Applicant organizations may submit no more than one application under this competition.

IV.3g. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

## **V. Application Review Information**

### **V.1. REVIEW PROCESS**

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for cooperative agreements resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

### **REVIEW CRITERIA**

1. **Quality of Program Plan and Ability to Achieve Program**

**Objectives:** Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. A detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should demonstrate clearly how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.

2. **Support for Diversity:** Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, presenters, and resource materials).

3. **Evaluation:** Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique and description of the methodology used to link outcomes to original project

objectives are strongly recommended.

4. **Cost-effectiveness/Cost-sharing:** The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support, as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

5. **Institutional Track Record/Ability:** Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be fully qualified to achieve the project's goals.

6. **Follow-on Activities:** Proposals should discuss provisions made for follow-up with returned participants as

a means of establishing longer-term individual and institutional linkages.

## **VI.) Award Administration Information**

### **VI.1a. Award Notices:**

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and mailed to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition.

### **VI.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements:**

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following:

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations."

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions."

OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Governments".

OMB Circular No. A-110 (Revised), Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations.

OMB Circular No. A-102, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants-in-Aid to State and Local Governments.

OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Government, and Non-profit Organizations

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>

<http://fa.statebuy.state.gov>

VI.3.       **Reporting Requirements:** You must provide ECA with a hard copy original and an electronic copy of the following reports:

- 1.)       A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award;
- 2.)       A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.
- 3.)       A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet with all program reports.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer reference the program "Monitoring and Evaluation" section in the POGI.)

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

**All reports must be sent to the ECA Grants Officer and ECA Program Officer listed in the final assistance award document.**

## **VII. Agency Contacts**

For questions about this announcement, contact: Program Officer Amy M. Rustan, U.S. Department of State, Study of the U.S. Branch, ECA/A/E/USS, SA-5, 4th floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20522-0503, tel: (202) 632-3337, fax: (202) 632-9411.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should indicate reference number ECA/A/E/USS-11-10.

**VIII. Other Information:****Notice:**

The terms and conditions published in this RFGP are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative.

Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding.

Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section VI.3 above.

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Ann Stock

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Date

Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs

U.S. Department of State

